

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-3. (cancelled):

4.(currently amended): ~~[[The]] A process according to claim 1 comprising for the production of dimethyl carbonate comprising the steps of:~~

(a) feeding said stream containing urea, methanol, water and ammonium carbamate to a first ~~reaction~~ reaction/distillation zone:

(b) concurrently in said first reaction/distillation zone,

(i) reacting water with urea to form ammonium carbamate,

(ii) decomposing the ammonium carbamate in the feed and the ammonium carbamate from the reaction of water with urea into ammonia and carbon dioxide, and

(iii) separating the ammonia, carbon ~~monoxide~~ dioxide and methanol from the urea and by distillation;

(c) removing ammonia, carbon dioxide and methanol from said first reaction/distillation zone as a first overheads;

(d) removing urea and methanol from said first reaction/distillation zone as a first bottoms;

(e) feeding said first bottoms and methanol to a second reaction/distillation zone;

(f) concurrently in said second reaction/distillation zone,

(i) reacting methanol and urea in the presence of a homogeneous catalyst comprising an organotin complex compound of dialkylmethoxide in a high boiling solvent to form dimethyl carbonate and

(ii) separating dimethyl carbonate and ammonia from the homogeneous catalyst by distillation.

(g) removing dimethyl carbonate and methanol from said second

reaction/distillation zone as a second overheads; and

(h) removing a second bottoms from said second ~~distillation column reactor~~
reaction/distillation zone.

5.(original): The process according to claim 4 wherein the dimethyl carbonate in said second overheads is separated from the methanol by extractive distillation.

6.(original): The process according to claim 4 wherein an inert diluent is added to said first overheads.

7.(currently amended): The process according to claim 4 wherein the methanol in said first overheads is condensed and a portion of said condensed methanol is returned to near the top of said first ~~distillation column reactor~~
reaction/distillation zone as reflux and the remainder of said condensed methanol is returned to the lower section of said first ~~distillation column reactor~~ reaction/distillation zone .

8.(currently amended): The process according to claim 4 wherein a first portion of said second bottoms is fed to said ~~distillation column reactor~~
reaction/distillation zone, a second portion of said second bottoms is recycled to said second ~~distillation column~~ reaction/distillation zone and a third portion of said second bottoms is fed to a third distillation column reactor for catalyst regeneration and heavies cleanup.

9.(currently amended): The process according to claim 4 wherein said second overheads is condensed and a portion of said condensed second overheads is returned to said second ~~distillation column~~ reaction/distillation zone as reflux.

10-20. (cancelled):